

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO: HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS  
FROM: REBECCA LANE, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
MANAGER  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
SUBJECT: REQUEST TO ALLOCATE NINETEEN (19) VETERANS AFFAIRS  
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR THE RIVER CITY  
SENIOR APARTMENTS UNDER A FIFTEEN-YEAR PROJECT-  
BASED HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACT

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing and Community Services Department that the Housing Authority, by resolution, approve the allocation of nineteen (19) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers under a fifteen-year Project-Based Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract for the River City Senior Apartments.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers for Sonoma County are allocated to the City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority. Under an existing agreement with the Sonoma County Housing Authority, the City of Santa Rosa administers the VASH vouchers outside Santa Rosa city limits.

The River City Senior Apartments is a proposed development applying under a new construction application for the Project-Based Voucher program. The project is a 53-unit affordable housing project located at 951 Petaluma Boulevard in Petaluma. The project is designed for low income vulnerable seniors, with nineteen units reserved exclusively for Veterans under the HUD-VASH program. The proposed project includes indoor and outdoor community space and a wellness center that will allow the provision of medical, dental or community services necessary for senior residents to age in place.

PEP Housing has applied for the remaining nineteen Project-Based Vouchers under the HUD-VASH Request for Proposals, which has been open with a rolling deadline since 2015.

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BACKGROUND

The Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program is a component of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. Under this program, a Public Housing Authority can attach up to 20 percent of its budget authority under the Housing Choice Voucher program to specific housing units. Project-basing of HUD-VASH vouchers is allowed so long as the VA is in support of the project.

The low vacancy rates and rent costs in Sonoma County have presented significant challenges to Veterans attempting to use HUD-VASH vouchers. The utilization rate for the program is currently 78 percent.

The Housing Authority approved the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Project-Based VASH Vouchers in 2015 with up to 100 vouchers available. To date, 81 vouchers have been allocated under the RFP. The projects awarded vouchers include Windsor Veterans Village in Windsor, Heritage Park Apartments in Windsor, Altamira Family Apartments in Sonoma and Benton Veterans Village in Santa Rosa. The River City Apartments location in Petaluma will ensure a wide geographical distribution of quality Veterans housing units throughout the county under the VASH program.

The River City Senior Apartments proposal (Proposal) was reviewed by a committee consisting of three Housing Authority commissioners. The proposal was reviewed separately by the VA including an interview with the developers, and the VA is in support of the project.

The Housing Authority approval of the Proposal will authorize staff to enter into the appropriate Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts as required under the PBV regulations at 24 CFR Part 983 for the River City Senior Apartments.

PRIOR HOUSING AUTHORITY REVIEW

Not Applicable

ANALYSIS

The River City Senior Apartments project is proposed for a 1.31 acre site at 951 Petaluma Boulevard in Petaluma. The project will include 53 one-bedroom units and one two-bedroom manager's unit. All units will be targeted for low income seniors aged 55 years and older, and 19 units will be reserved for Veterans under the HUD-VASH program. The project will consist of three two- or three-story buildings. Each residential unit will have a private deck, patio or balcony.

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The proposed project, which is adjacent to the Petaluma River, will include a pedestrian path allowing public access to the river; the developer will be making frontage improvements at Petaluma Boulevard South and along the riverfront, including a new public pathway. The project's community room will include a full kitchen and an outdoor patio with a full view of the river; a gazebo, garden with raised beds and fenced dog run are also planned for the outdoor space.

The project also proposes an on-site wellness center where healthcare professionals and community members can provide medical, dental or community services designed to help seniors age in place. PEP Housing is partnering with the Petaluma Health Center for the development of the wellness center at the project.

Other residential amenities on the site include laundry, storage, an exercise room, a craft area, and a computer room. Onsite group workspaces and private offices will be offered for shared use by community partners such as the VA and other agencies providing services to residents.

The Proposal meets the requirements of the PBV regulations at 24 CFR 983 and the revisions under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) as outlined in the implementation guidance in Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Notice 2017-21.

### FISCAL IMPACT

The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority has an existing Project-Based Voucher program with 114 operational units and 94 vouchers committed to future projects, representing a total of 11% of the Housing Choice Voucher program budget authority.

Initial contract rents for the River City Senior Apartments units are expected to be set at the payment standard in place at the time of occupancy, subject to rent reasonableness determination.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The River City Senior Apartments are new construction and subject to environmental review under the PBV regulations. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Phase 1 review has been completed and determined that the project will not result in a significant impact. The City of Petaluma is the Responsible Entity for the project and has approved the Environmental Assessment.

### COUNCIL/BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A subcommittee of three Housing Authority commissioners reviewed the River City

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Apartments proposal and recommended full Housing Authority approval of the proposal and closing of the Request for Proposals under which PEP Housing applied. The River City proposal requests nineteen vouchers, which is the remaining number available under the VASH PBV RFP which has been open with a rolling deadline since 2015.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Project-Based Voucher Request for River City Apartments
- Resolution

CONTACT

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